

## **SOP #31 Revised 10-20-22**

### **SWAT UNIT WARRANT SERVICE**

**POLICY:** The SWAT Unit will serve warrants for investigators when the appropriate threat level is reached (see Warrant Guideline section for threat level descriptions). If for any reason warrant service is refused, a memo must be submitted to the SWAT Unit Commanding Officer, by the SWAT supervisor refusing service with all pertinent information.

**PROCEDURE:** When a request is accepted the ORS/ORR must record all pertinent info in the warrant log book located in the operations room. In the case where two investigative units are requesting the same date and time for service, a SWAT supervisor will determine which warrant has priority.

A thorough recon and brief will be conducted before warrant service is attempted (see Recon & Briefing section).

Upon arrival at the predetermined staging area, SWAT vehicles should take their positions according to the line-of-march. At least one loaded SWAT truck should be included in the operation. Both SWAT supervisors will obtain a copy of the warrant from the investigators and check it for accuracy and be guided by procedures outlined in SOP#28. Investigators should be informed to follow the last SWAT vehicle in the line-of-march but at a distance. Their vehicles may be used to block traffic for the SWAT personnel serving the warrant.

A SWAT supervisor should check (via radio on "SWAT" band) to ensure all personnel are ready before leaving staging area. For example: "front containment ready, rear containment ready, etc..." When all units have responded "ready" the command to proceed to the target will be given.

Headlights should be turned off prior to entering the block of the target location. Upon arrival at the target location, the entry team should disembark in an area that will maximize concealment.

Front containment and the entry team should arrive at the target location simultaneously so as not to lose the "**element of surprise**". Front containment will be responsible for providing security for the entry team in addition to their containment duties.

Rear containment will be in position before entry team begins its approach to target. Rear containment will be responsible for preventing occupants from fleeing or exiting the property. Rear containment should maximize the use of cover and concealment.

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When approaching the target, entry team should be lined-up in a manner that is consistent with current SWAT Unit training techniques (i.e. tight formation, along building line, etc.)

All SWAT Unit supervisors will adhere to Directive 5.7-6, The Knock and Announce Rule.

Knock and Announce Rule Directive 5.7 6 B

1. The purpose of the "knock and announce" rule is to prevent violence and physical injury to police and occupants, to protect an occupant's expectation of privacy, to prevent property damage resulting from forced entry and to give the occupants an opportunity to surrender the premises.
2. The manner of entry is provided for in Rule 2007 of the Pennsylvania Rules of Criminal Procedure and is as follows:
  - a. A law enforcement officer executing a search warrant shall, before entry, give or make reasonable effort to give, notice of their identity, authority and purpose to any occupant of the premises specified in the warrant, UNLESS exigent circumstances require immediate forcible entry.
  - b. Such officer shall await a response for a reasonable period of time after their announcement before gaining entry into the property.
  - c. If the officer is not admitted after such a reasonable period of time, they may forcibly enter the premises and may use as much physical force to effect entry therein as is necessary to execute the search warrant.

**NOTE:** The courts have not precisely and uniformly determined the exact period of time that can be considered "reasonable". However, recent court decisions have shown that 30 seconds should be the minimum time police personnel should delay their entry into a property after announcing their presence and purpose.

Manpower is dependent on situation and clearing tactics are consistent with SWAT Unit training techniques.

The following is an example of a basic line-up of manpower and equipment:

Front Containment = 2 Officers

Rear Containment = 2 Officers, (1P/O with MK-9)

Hospital Car = 2 Officers, (1 EMT & 1 Driver)

Entry Team = 8 Officers (6 P/O's / 2 Supervisors)

#1= P/O w/Primary and secondary weapon

#2= P/O w/Primary and secondary weapon

#3= Supervisor w/Primary and secondary weapon

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#4= P/O w/Primary and secondary weapon  
#5= P/O w/Primary and secondary weapon and water-based fire extinguisher  
#6= Supervisor w/Primary and secondary weapon  
#7= P/O w/handgun and ram or other breaching tool. This officer should follow #1 when approaching the property.  
#8= P/O w/Primary and secondary weapon and haligan

**\*At least one officer should be a certified EMT.**

All personnel will be equipped with a radio w/headset and one flashbang. All radios will be set on "SWAT #1 band."

Investigators will standby at good distance away from target location until property is secured. A SWAT supervisor will notify the investigators when the building is safe for them to enter and if suspect was apprehended. After investigators enter the property and are briefed, all SWAT personnel should leave the area immediately unless requested by investigators to standby.

At the completion of the warrant service, the SWAT Unit Supervisor will request a copy of the 75-48 (Investigate Premise) be faxed to the SWAT Unit. A 75-48 Investigate Premise is required from Investigators or Affiants as per Directive #159 after the service of a warrant.

The operation will be debriefed at headquarters after the service. After the debrief, a SWAT Supervisor will assign an officer to complete a Service Report which includes the following: a service sheet, a recon sheet, a copy of the warrant, photos of the target house, photos of the defendant, and a copy of the 75-48 faxed by the investigators.

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